

G. Thompson
W. C. Crafts
W. Hincks

Boston, (Mass.) Feb. 4, 1857.

Dear Mr. Estlin,

Last evening I filled some pages of letters to yourself and Miss Estlin, in reply to your favours - truly such - by Dr. Sargent. They are now packed, with a quantity of Liberty Bells, Bazaar Gazette, & Annual Report, &c., in a box directed to R. D. Webb, Dublin, and will go on board the good ship "Plymouseth Rock" tomorrow. I will anticipate the arrival of those letters by this short note, to thank you & your daughter for your very kind letter by Dr. S. (which were rec'd. Jan. the 3^d), and for the notes of Mrs. Massie, correspondence with Miss Carpenter, & printed sheets, one of which bore testimony to your zeal, undiminished by bodily weakness & disease, in behalf of our Bazaar and the great cause it aids. I was very sorry to find that your health was still so poor; I trust it is in the way of restoration, both and that your daughter also will find increase of health & strength. I hope to hear from you soon. My letters (in the box) touched upon Dr. Hall's case, upon Geo. Thompson, his health & his labours,

upon our late Annual Meeting, and Soiree
in honour of the Liberator, and upon the
unparalleled baseness of Orville Davey. I
shall not, in this short note, open those matters
again, save to say that G. Thompson is better, after
a violent attack of cold which brought ^{him} near to a fever,
although he still is feeble. He has worked too hard,
has exhausted himself, and even now has too
much work laid out before him, and I fear
will break down under it. I have kept the
little circular, concerning a testimonial to him in
England, quite private, only Mr. Garrison (I believe)
having seen it, but the affair has got wind in
some other way* - though I have heard but very
little said about it. Mr. T. has seemed to
thoroughly enjoy his visit here, has been in excellent
spirits, & has won many hearts. It cannot be
much, pecuniarily, that he will carry away; but
still, I hope, something that will be an aid and
relief. It has cost him nothing for hotel-living
since he arrived here; the houses of Mr. Garrison,
Mr. Charles Hovey, and Francis Jackson, having
been his Boston homes, and doors gladly open to
him in every other place he has been in. - I
heard from him, today, that he had spoken 53
times since landing in this country. -

A noticeable thing about our Annual Meeting, which has not however as yet been suitably noticed, was the entire absence, throughout, of all Reporters. In all former meetings we have had swarms of them, crowding our Secretaries' tables, and sticking by the sessions from the first to the last. Now! an entire change. The cause is not difficult to be divined. Daniel Webster's edict is, No more agitation of the question of Slavery! The discussion of it must be suppressed! The poor tools and hirelings, who manage the Boston press, one and all say and do as the "Grand Mufti" says and does. But like Sydney Smith's Dame Partington and her maids, who tried to mop up the Atlantic, they cut, and are doomed to cut, a very ridiculous figure, and to be scoffed at and despised by the very men who are using them. Their absence of course was no loss to us; they never undertook to report our meetings, only to caricature them, and find ^a vent for their ribald jokes, which made their little, almost illegible, sheets sell more briskly.

Dr. Sargent was very well when last I saw him - greatly regretted (as I did) that he could not go to Bristol - & said the friend, whose illness prevented it, was rather better after his voyage, though not permanently so (as Dr. S. supposed).

I am very desirous that you and your daughter should see William and Ellen Craft, who, as you are aware, are now in Scotland. I want all my Bristol friends to see them. I wish every body, that has a soul, to see them; and the sight of them, and the reflection that Slave long has made, and now claims them, as property, and seems its human bloodhounds to drag them into Slavery again, is enough to create a soul under the ribs of death. Our excellent brother Francis Bishop, I am told, had them at his house in Liverpool. I hope Ellen's health will be restored. She is a very modest, and in all respects lady like, woman. At first sight, tho' never failing to make a favorable impression, does her ^{imperfect} ~~no~~ justice. Her character, manners, & mind, all grow upon you, on acquaintance. And her husband is manly, and a truly worthy man. I spoke to them of Bristol and you, and gave them a letter to you.

I was called into our Common Pleas Court, 2 weeks ago, to give testimony as to whether I knew Wm. & Ellen C., and what I knew of their purpose as to returning to this country. By advice of Mr. S. E. Sewall, I declined answering at all, on the ground that, under the Fugitive Slave Law, such answers as I might give, would subject me to a criminal prosecution. - A plea of self-defense, truly! But, then, what that Law makes crime, the Gospel of Christ enjoins as a peremptory duty. - I shall not refuse imprisonment & fine, when they come in regular course under that law; but I do not think myself bound to furnish any Court with evidence against me. And so the Judge decided the case ^{was} ~~was~~ argued, not in open Court, but in Chambers. There was a single question in the case of Wm. Craft & Wife, vs. Hughes, ^{from Liverpool to N. York} ~~for~~ ^{for} a conspiracy to kidnap. — We are i.e. on shade comm. in great anxiety about the steamship "Atlantic", one of Collins's new line, which has been now 40 days at sea, and no tidings of her. It is very generally feared we shall never see her. This is dreadful!

Mr. P. S. I sent you an American Almanac, a Unitⁿ. Annual Register, Chab.
Summer; Argument on Exclusive Coloured Schools, W. J. Bowditch's very
valuable pamphlet on "Slavery", &c. I sent to Mr. Lator the 2 latter &
also a Report of the Mass. A.S. Society, & the Memoir of Thos. Jones, a Slave.

During the summer you will please direct your letter to me (I hope
they will be written) at Leicester. I shall probably be here most
of the time after the 1st of June until cold weather again. Since the
1st of March, or thereabouts, my health has been far from good;
I think I tried my strength injudiciously in November and
December last. I ^{lectured} spoke a great deal. It produced a tendency of
blood to the head, & very copious bleeding at the nose. I thought but little
of that after it was checked, but after a time began to be sensible of an
irregular action & circulation of the blood generally; this at length
brought on, for about 48 hours, a most severe pain (with some palpita-
tion) in the region of the heart. I was kept in the house about
5 days with this; & have not felt right since, though better
since I came to Leicester. I called in a homœopathic physician,
Dr. Geist, - of much reputation in Boston with those who have faith
in that treatment, & who has practised in our family & among our
connexions with much success. Under his treatment, the pain ceased
by degrees; but I had become quite weak & lost flesh under the
pain. He told me I must be careful of speaking much, as I might
produce some hemorrhage. I have therefore spared myself, and
spoken less frequently since that time. You will not approve my
judgment in my medical adviser; I do not profess entire confidence
in the system of homœopathy, but I have a profound regard for their idea
of leaving every much to nature the curative process, and also a
very great dislike of a course of medicine & the confinement &
prostration of strength it brings with it. But I shall be very glad to
hear anything you may please to say against my judgment.
And I hope you will excuse so much on this point; and yet why I
should ask that, I don't know. I am glad & desirous to hear about
your health & that of all my Bristol friends; for without health
we can accomplish but little; and very much did both my wife
and myself regret learning that your daughter's health had been
so much impaired this winter. Why should I doubt then that
the matter of our health will have an interest with you?

Ade. has written you a brief note, which I send with
this. Please thank Miss Carpenter (if they came from her) for the
various documents concerning the Ragged School in Bristol.

As to Mr. Hinch's letter to you, I find I cannot express all
I should like without writing a note as long as his own.
When I read his letter first I pronounced it a very weak & lame
defence of himself. It is full of special pleading; he may think
I did him injustice (& call it "severe censure" to express it to a
man I said, which I still say, that he shunned the Anti-Slavery
cause when here; & he may allude to visits to Mr. Garrison,
Buffum, to the Bazaar, &c. &c. in proof that I was unjust; but I
repeat it is all special pleading. I know that Mr. Garrison felt,
he never talked about it much & only (so far as I know) when guests
that Mr. G. kept at a distance from him. To go to the Bazaar p.
little, though we were much gratified at seeing him there; pro-sl.
people, & even slaveholders, do go there, though not very frequently
to accept Mr. Buffum's invitation to pass time with him at Lynn
what very many men, of all views, have frequent opportunity
do, for Mr. B. is frank-hearted & liberal to an unusual extent.
But I would not make too much of all this, nor of his avoidance
of the Anti-Slavery Office (about which he says nothing.). He says -
continues to think that some such means as are employed by the
A.S. Association are needed" - why, in Heaven's name, didn't he say
that here, in some way & shape that it could reach the public ear,
let people, who knew him at all, know where he stood. But, so far
as I know, with regard to the great principles, necessities, & trials of our cause
he was, to all practical & efficient ends, wholly dumb, whilst here.
He knew he would involve himself in unpleasant differences, with Mr.
Gannett, Mr. Ellis, & those "excellent men for whom he has the very
highest respect & regard?" Uncharitable or otherwise, that is my
judgment. I cannot help judging according to the evidence, "I detests
as much as ever"; that said in Cork doesn't amount to a great deal, unless the man
was equally frank to say it when he had an opportunity to give his testimony
to the ears of the American people. He has left no mark here of his detestation of
His letter is blankly self-contradictory; he approves of the plans of the A.S. & so
& has the highest respect & regard, at the same time, for the excellent men, who believe
the plans & operations "morally wrong"! What he means by minimizing the
the Abolitionists "encourage fraud & violence in order to procure freedom for a
more individuals" (what sympathy with these individuals!), I do not know.
is meant for men who are responsible for A.S. operations, it is slanderous
But I must close, & take another opportunity for commenting on Mr.
Hinch's letter. I never was more completely deceived in any man.
If he had come here without Anti-Slavery opinions carefully matned, and
strongly & ably expressed (in England), I should have thought little about it.
But he had won my confidence, & betrayed it in every particular. with sincere respect
Very, Sincerely, S. May, Jr.